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Christmas Gifts

"Thou hast received gifts for men."—Psa. 68:18.

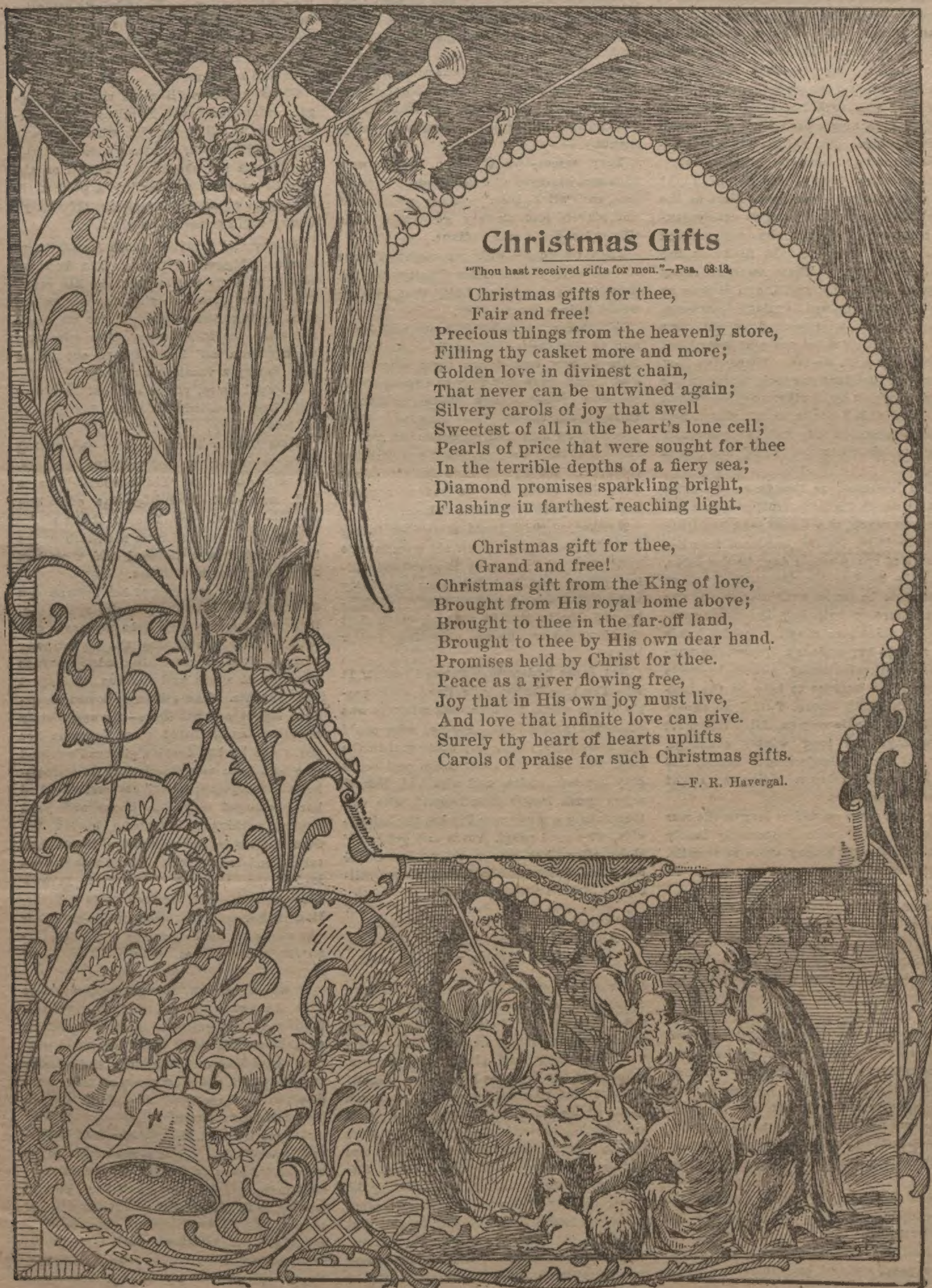
Christmas gifts for thee,
Fair and free!

Precious things from the heavenly store,
Filling thy casket more and more;
Golden love in divinest chain,
That never can be untwined again;
Silvery carols of joy that swell
Sweetest of all in the heart's lone cell;
Pearls of price that were sought for thee
In the terrible depths of a fiery sea;
Diamond promises sparkling bright,
Flashing in farthest reaching light.

Christmas gift for thee,
Grand and free!

Christmas gift from the King of love,
Brought from His royal home above;
Brought to thee in the far-off land,
Brought to thee by His own dear hand.
Promises held by Christ for thee.
Peace as a river flowing free,
Joy that in His own joy must live,
And love that infinite love can give.
Surely thy heart of hearts uplifts
Carols of praise for such Christmas gifts.

—F. R. Havergal.



Calisty's Christmas Tree

(Minnie Leona Upton, in 'American Messenger'.)

'There! now I sh'd think Miss Calisty might sit down, hull heft!'

It was the unanimous opinion of all Tunket, crystallized by Sophrony Crockett.

Forty-two years before, an energetic infant came to the home of Elon Tubbs, the most shiftless—nay, the only shiftless farmer in Tunket. She was named Calista, the name selected and laid by in readiness by her forehanded mother, along with the bibs and frocks. Elhanan was the alternative, had the case required it.

Calista Tubbs grew to be an eager faced little girl who took her small joys with shining eyes and closed lips; her small griefs likewise. But oh, the difference between those two shinings and silences!

But only her tongue was quiet. Light on her feet as a thistle down, alert as the little chipmunks which she so dearly loved, it seemed as though she only perched upon a chair ready to take flight on the moment's notice. There were so many things to do in the world, and it was so pleasant to be doing! Calisty sometimes wished that her well beloved 'pa' felt that way about it. But no one ever heard her express any such desire. When the idea became too insistent she took refuge in the reflection which her mother so often voiced, 'The Lord didn't make us all alike,' and thereby accounted for, and excused many things which otherwise would have been trying.

When it seemed as though strawberries must be about the only fruit she was tall enough to reach, she would take her little basket betimes, tuck a luncheon into her pocket, and spend whole days in the fields, jubilantly bearing her treasures home at tea time, to be taken next morning to the village store to help buy the scant 'patterns' of print and gingham which made her own and her mother's dresses. In winter she enthusiastically pulled bastings and sewed on buttons to help on the tailoring with which Esther Tubbs, an expert and tireless needle woman, filled the short winter days and long winter evenings. Later, as her mother's health failed, she took the whole burden upon her own slight but erect shoulders.

The years went on and at length she was left alone, and with desperately lonely heart, but always cheery voice and smile, she set herself to raise the mortgage on the farm so dear to her, the only home she had ever known, though more than one had been offered her, and refused for the loyal love she bore her own.

Tailoring, berrying, summer boarders, and work on the farm, assisted only by a neighbor's boy and a few weeks' help in haying and planting times—and still the goal was far away and Calisty's step had lost some of its spring, though her voice and manner were buoyant as ever, when suddenly the unexpected happened. A small legacy from an erratic and long-unheard from uncle in the West put the farm safely into the tired and tollworn, but un-resting hands, and left a reassuring margin.

It was at this time that it was reasonably conjectured that 'Calisty might sit down hull heft.'

At first it seemed that she might satisfy the prophets and prophetesses. She

had Uncle Si Hill come and paint the house outside and in, had the rooms re-papered, re-carpeted, whitewashed, kalsomined, curtained and draped, as only Miss Calisty could have done without caustic comment.

Then, when all was swept and garnished, she put the capstone on our towering amazement by boarding the bi-weekly stage attired and equipped for travelling. Mehitabel Fogg asserted that Almiry Tucker had told her that Miss Calisty had said that she was going for a trip to visit some friends in the city, but not one of us had ever heard of her knowing anybody there, and we keenly resented the semblance of superior information in one who was not really 'of' us, having lived all her life in the village. Therefore we forebore to question or comment, and awaited developments.

They came—two of them. They were thin and big-eyed and distressingly speckless and 'slicked-up.' They were twins and eleven, and Calisty got them at a 'Home,' and she was radiant.

Then we knew—what we ought to have known before—that Miss Calisty did not want 'to sit down hull heft,' that nothing would induce her to do it.

We soon grew to know Amos and Janet and to like them right well. And after Miss Calisty had shown them where the best berries grew and they had spent scores of long, sweet sunny hours gathering them, their chests filled out, and their cheeks grew rosy and rounded, and we decided that they were excellent well-looking children. We agreed that Calisty might have done worse, and we nodded approvingly and prophesied fair things.

Neither of them could remember father or mother—nobody but an old woman who had taken all the money they earned selling papers and had fed them sparingly and intermittently, and clothed them thinly, and finally died in a fit of wrath that was brought on by an offending fellow lodger.

But Janie had a well-watered regret. It was Panky—Panky, who lived with people beside whom her own task mistress was embodied amiability. Panky, who could sell more papers than any other girl in the city, who knew the most songs and could play the harmonica, and who had 'licked' a boy much larger than herself, who was tormenting a stray cat; Panky, the inimitable, who used rough words and got 'mad' right often, but who never told a lie or did a mean thing. And Panky was selling papers on the city streets.

'Who hath given to me this sweet
And given my brother dust to eat.
And when will his wage come in?'

Janie might have soliloquized had she been conversant with the poets, which she was not. But she felt it, and to the prayers which she said at bed time she added a fervent appendix: 'And please, dear Father, manage it somehow so Panky can come!'

There was so much room and so much to eat at the farm and Panky was so small and needed so little to eat—oh, if 'Aunt Calisty' would only think to ask her too! But Janie couldn't ask her to do that. She only told things about Panky and spoke of her oftener than semi-occasionally (because she couldn't help it) and prayed vigorously.

Barring this shadow, life at the farm was delightful, and the twins flourished

like green bay trees, till all of a sudden everything went wrong. It came about at the time of fall cleaning in which they were assisting, Amos beating rugs until his determined little face was scarlet, and Janie mopping and dusting and arranging and rearranging until their nutting was sadly neglected.

'Chippy'll get ahead of us,' said Amos, somewhat regretfully, as he rested a moment to watch the bright-eyed chipmunk who was laying in his winter's supplies in the hollow trunk of the old sweetening tree that stretched its richly laden arms out, almost into the windows of the 'kitchen and spare room.'

'Never mind, we'll catch up, we're bigger,' responded Janet, dangling a long paring from the Gravensteins which she was preparing for pies, and then adroitly flinging it over her shoulder. It fell on the smooth stone step forming a perfect 'P' with part of an 'a' attached. 'If "only" Panky could come!' she sighed.

'Panky "is" a brick,' quoth Amos, 'if we was only bigger! P'raps we kin fix it up somehow, some day so that she kin come. I'm gittin' stronger ev'ry day an' pr'aps next spring Aunt Calisty'll let me work out some for Mr. Bonney after our farm work's done, an' I could earn enough to give Panky a vacation any way.'

'P'raps! Amos, you're a brick! Anyway we'll keep on a-thinkin' hard! An' a pray-in' too.'

Miss Calisty hurrying into the sitting room to attend to her stewing quinces, heard with a sigh, 'Three wouldn't be so bad, now—but by-an'-by—the education an' all—I d'no'. No, I can't, that's all.'

When she returned from the kitchen, the twins' 'stint' was finished and they had scurried off to the beeches.

Upstairs the contents of her best bureau drawers were spread upon the spare bed, then one by one they were replaced, and Miss Calisty was closing the last drawer when a sense of something missing made her open it again and thoroughly inspect the contents. The others followed in order. No, it was not there—the exquisitely beautiful embroidered scarf brought her years ago by her dearest girlhood's friend who had gone as a missionary to China—her one altogether lovely possession. And her prolonged search in house and yard availed nothing. Then she buried her flushed face in her trembling hands and cried heart-breakingly. But it was not the loss of the scarf—no, far worse! It was the suspicion—transformed into conviction in her quick decided mind—that her boy and girl, the beings she loved and lived for, were thieves. She could not bear it.

It was a tearless, though saddened face that the twins saw when they returned, feeling a little guilty at having fittied off so unceremoniously. Now that their nutting fever had cooled a little they really felt it quite a grave offence and their subdued little faces only served to deepen that awful conviction.

'It was for that Panky,' she said to herself resentfully. 'She's too smart to be trusted. I haven't seen all the letters she's sent them, an' I b'lieve she's been puttin' 'em up to it. She could sell it for a lot of money. But I won't accuse them or even ask them. If kindness won't make them ashamed an' sorry, then nothin' will, and an ownin' up that isn't a free-will offer-

ing, isn't worth the breath it takes. I'll wait, an' see—an' love them harder'n ever.'

So she waited and loved and heaped systematic benefits upon the little brown heads so profusely that even they, who had known her kindness so well, were astounded. But somehow, the 'spring' had gone out of life at the farm. Janie and Amos felt it, and began to try to fit an explanation to it. They finally decided that something was worrying Aunt Calisty, probably money matters.

'I wonder if 'tis,' quavered Janie, 'she don't smile nearly all the time, an' she don't tell stories—or anything—only do things for us!'

'P'raps she's gettin' poor. We've hed such heaps of things!'

'An' we eat so much. Couldn't we eat a little less—just a little less of everything?'

'I—I'll try,' gulped Amos, thinking of buttered pan-cakes and honey.

So they did try, and succeeded—not very, very well, but well enough to make Miss Calisty heartsick with renewed apprehension. She had begun to faintly hope that something else might have happened to the scarf—but this indifference to food could but be the result of guilty and struggling consciences—nothing less.

The morning of the day before Christmas broke wild and stormy, with a wind that rocked the sturdy old house and lashed its roof with the elm branches. Breakfast was progressing, rather silently, when there came such a crash outside that they were all up and at the window before the echoes died away. There lay the old sweetening tree, still quivering.

'My dear old tree,' cried Miss Calisty.

'Poor little chippy,' wailed the twins.

'Mr. Bonney's cat caught him just before the first freeze. I hated to tell you,' explained Miss Calisty, turning away with quivering lips from the sight that was to her a tragedy.

'Let's go and see how little Chip had his winter bed made,' proposed Janet.

'All right,' said Amos, only too glad, manlike, to escape the sight of tears which he could neither understand nor help to dry.

Miss Calisty stood and watched them peering and poking about. Suddenly Amos gave a shout, and held up in both hands a bright soft something.

Calisty sank into a chair, 'weak as a rag,' she would have said. The twins both rushed in.

'It's that dandy thing you showed us the mishnery lady gave you, ain't it? See it ain't hurt hardly a bit. How did Chippy get it?'

'I s'pose it flew out of the window clean-in' time—'twas a windy day,' responded Miss Calisty, in a queer, choked voice, as she held the scarf at arm's length. Suddenly she hid her face in it and cried and cried and 'cried.' Then she hugged the twins—both at once till they gasped.

'I b'lieve it's clearing off!' she cried, 'an' I b'lieve I'll take the stage an' ketch the train for the city. I'm kind of behind on Christmas things. I ain't felt well o' late, an' so kept putting it off.'

How were the twins to know that she had never been known to go farther than the village for 'Christmas things?'

'It was that scarf thing that's ailed Aunt Calisty. I don't b'lieve it was not havin' money at all!'

'Nor I,' replied Amos, with conviction—

and mournfully thinking of the pancakes he might have had.

But to his credit be it said he never once 'threw it up' to Janet that the uncalled for fasting was of her proposing. There was good stuff in Amos.

It was late that evening when Calisty returned, so late that the twins were fast asleep on the sitting room sofa, so soundly asleep that the clink of the late supper dishes did not rouse them.

Christmas morning dawned radiantly, and they awoke betimes—but earlier still had Miss Calisty been astir, moving softly and swiftly in and out, up and down.

They lay rubbing their eyes, wondering why they were all dressed, then of a sudden they saw a wonder that swallowed up all others—a big bough of the old sweetening tree, fastened up securely by the fireplace, bright with streamers and candles, and laden with gifts and under it—Panky!

'She's come to stay,' gasped Miss Calisty, between hugs.

'Always?'

'Always!' replied Miss Calisty, with rapid decision.

'Always!' echoed, half-laughed, half-sobbed, Panky.

And, neither Miss Calisty nor the twins being people given to much speaking, she never knew how she had worried them until they voluntarily half starved themselves, and they never knew how much, how nearly everything that queer Christmas tree meant to their dear Lady Bountiful.

Christmas Carol.

(Phillips Brooks, in 'Onward.')

The earth has grown old with its burden of care,

But at Christmas it always is young.
The heart of the jewel burns lustrous and fair,

And its soul full of music breaks forth on the air,

When the song of the angels is sung.

It is coming, old earth, it is coming to-night!

On the snowflakes which cover thy sod,
The feet of the Christ-child fall gentle and white,
And the voice of the Christ-child tells out with delight

That mankind are the children of God.

On the sad and the lonely, the wretched and poor,

The voice of the Christ-child shall fall;
And to every blind wanderer open the door,

Of a hope that he dared not dream of before,

With a sunshine of welcome for all.

The feet of the humblest walk in the field,
Where the feet of the holiest have trod,
This, this is the marvel to mortals revealed,

When the silvery trumpets of Christmas have pealed

That mankind are the children of God.

Peace on Earth.

For any true peace on earth, there must be peace with God. God has said it universally: 'There shall be no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.' How can there be peace in the soul so long as man is not reconciled to his Maker? Strange word—

'Peace with God!' Then, if there is now peace, there has been war. War with God! War of a worm with Omnipotence! Yet so it was, and so it is and so it would be for ever, if the Dayspring had not come and laid his hand upon us, both. He, and he only, is 'Peace.' He who has him has peace. People say: 'Make your peace with God.' Make your peace with God! You can never make your peace with God. But accept Christ and you accept Peace. The Gospel is the treaty; the angel's song, echoed now, was its herald; that light upon the hills was its flag of truce; the love of the Father drew the treaty; the blood of Christ sealed the treaty, and the contracting parties are an eternal God of truth, and every rebel man who lays down his arms, and puts his hand to the contract and professes 'Jesus only.' Made by that peace with God—within it, and a part of it, is the peace of the conscience, a sprinkled conscience. The language of that conscience is: 'I believe—I feel—I know that I am forgiven. I am simply nothing but a poor, poor sinner, forgiven; but whatever happens to me now, my affairs stand right with God.' He has said it and I take it, 'There is now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus;' and there, by the infinite grace of God, I have placed myself, and I now am. They talk of 'Christmas pleasures!' What are they all to that sense of safety, that deep, inward peace? Can there be 'pleasure' if there is no peace? Could the Israelites sit down to the Paschal banquet, with the angel of death in the air, and no blood upon the door? Can you enjoy life if you are not ready to 'meet with God,' who may come in upon the Christmas revel? Be sure that you have peace with your own conscience—the peace of a witness within that you are in Christ—that you love Christ—that you would not willingly do anything to grieve Christ; that your own heart knows, in your own poor way, your first wish, your great end in life, is to please and serve and glorify Christ. Oh, that this 'peace' may be God's own Christmas gift—the peace of a Christ born in the low places of your own poor, mean, wicked heart; a Christ known—a Christ consciously your own—a Christ reflected in a life of self-sacrificing forgiveness and love to everyone. Put peace into your motto.—Canon J. Vaughan.

More Work for the Crusaders

13 Caer Howell street, Toronto.

Dear Editor,—We received a letter from Pastor Cornelius asking for the 'Weekly Witness,' 'World Wide,' and 'Northern Messenger.' I thought I would ask you to kindly announce in your columns requesting readers of those papers after reading them to forward to his address as follows: Pastor M. Cornelius, Agraharam, Pittapuram, Godavery District, India.

Yours sincerely,

EVA DEMPSTER.

(Should friends wish to supply Pastor Cornelius they are offered the 'Weekly Witness' at \$1.54, 'World Wide' \$1.00, 'Northern Messenger' 77 cents, all post-paid to India, for one year.)

We acknowledge, with thanks, the following gifts:—

A Friend in Magog . . . \$.50
Mrs. Frith 2.00
M. J. W. B. 2.00

Faithfully,

M. EDWARDS-COLE.

Uncle Elias's Christmas Dinner

(Sophie Swett, in the 'Northwestern Christian Advocate'.)

'I've got a letter from Angenette! She has invited me to spend Christmas with them. I shall hear the Christmas music in the city!'

Polly Johnson rushed into the great big kitchen breathless and blooming.

'Oh, mother, do you know—Aunt Sarah, you hardly listened! Oh, Buffkins!' She held the yellow kitten aloft with playful, affectionate squeezes. 'Oh, Towzer!' She looked earnestly into the great dog's humanely wistful eyes—'do you know what it means to me to go to the city to hear the Christmas music?'

Towzer, feeling that a good deal was expected of him, barked madly, and the yellow kitten, returned to the floor, arched her small back and spit.

'Oh, I know I'm making a great fuss!' said Polly penitently, quelling the uproar, 'but in all the nineteen years of my life no such bit of good fortune ever came to me before.'

'Seems as if 'twouldn't have hurt Angenette and her mother to have thought of it before,' said Aunt Sarah. 'I expect Adeline has found it pretty hard to get along, anyhow, since Alpheus died,' said Polly's mother apologetically. 'She has to eke out what little he left her by doing embroidery to sell and Angenette is all fitted for college and can't get money enough to go.'

'That's so hard,' said Polly, sighing deeply. Polly knew what it was not to be able to get money enough to take music-lessons when, as she said, music was the only thing there was in her.

'Where's Adeline's brother 'Lias? He's an old bach and been real thrifty and saving,' said Aunt Sarah. 'He could afford to send Angenette to college if he was a mind to.'

'He's only a half-brother,' said Mrs. Johnson. 'He belongs to the first family and they never had any patience with Adeline's shiftless ways. His mother was a real smart housekeeper and so were his own sisters.'

'Angenette is so ambitious!' breathed Polly sympathetically. 'Oh, I think it's so good of her to remember to ask me at this Christmas time! And I have enough left of the damson preserves money to pay my fare!'

'I only hope Adeline won't expect you to scrub her floor. There's always them that gets their floors scrubbed for 'em and them that has to scrub 'em for other folks,' said Aunt Sarah.

'Aunt Adeline was always kind to me, and Angenette used to help me with fractions when we went to school together,' said Polly. 'But I had almost got over hoping that they would invite me.'

Off went Polly the day before Christmas, thankful for the becomingness of her best hat and with a happy sense of the sufficiency of the plum-preserve money.

It was Christmas in Cherryfield, white, thrilling, solemnly glad.

In the village church they would sing Christmas hymns and Polly delighted to

hear 'While she-e-pherds wa-a-atched their flo-ocks by night,' although Deacon Pengo's tenor was thin and husky and Miss Jenkins was especially liable to flat upon special occasions.

Sentiment is not dependent upon esthetic sense, thank God! and Polly's heart was warmer than her ear was fine.

And yet with all her musical soul she longed to hear the Christmas hymns and carols, the Christmas sentiment, as the great masters gave it utterance, as she knew one heard it in the great city churches and cathedrals. She had the musical taste that is sometimes strangely independent of training and a musical talent that was only secondary, so she laughingly said, to her talent for making preserves.

They only eked out the necessities of life on the stony little farm and there was almost nothing that a girl could do to earn money in Cherryfield.

Polly saw no hope that the way would open before her and tried to be contented with playing, by ear, on the wheezy old melodeon and helping out the village festivities with Jo Barham's violin, which she could play much better than Jo, although she was all untaught.

And for once—'for once!'—she would satisfy her soul with sweet sounds and store up echoes to fill the long, dumb winter days. The great apartment house on the narrow city street towered aloft until its top was almost lost in the blue, like old Tumble-Down mountain, at home. Polly went up, up, under the auspices of an apathetic elevator boy, until her breath was almost taken away, and was astonished to find that Aunt Adeline's tiny flat was only half way to the top.

Angenette greeted her with earnest apologies for failing to meet her at the station. 'Of all strange things to happen, Uncle Elias has come to spend Christmas!' she said. Her long reflective face was pale and her high forehead showed all its incipient lines. 'We were all upset when he wrote,' she continued, breathing hard with excitement. 'We never expected he would! He wrote that he had heard that I was ambitious and he liked to have ambition in the family if it was the right kind. His mother had an ambition to be the finest cook in Hillsboro' county and his grandmother never let one of her family wear a bit of cloth that she didn't spin and weave! Mother hopes that he will send me to college; he would only have to pay my tuition, you know; R—— college is only four miles out of town and I could live at home.'

Angenette looked so eager and wistful that Polly felt almost as if she were Uncle Elias and her fate lay in her hands.

'But I don't believe he is that kind—I mean I don't believe that I am his kind,' Angenette went on breathlessly. 'He thinks that a girl ought to be a good housekeeper first of all, and I am not. And he says that it isn't moral, that it makes people deceitful to live in a little flat, as we do, where everything turns into something else. Thank fortune we have one bedroom with a real bed in it to give him! You won't mind sleeping on the parlor table? It turns into a beautiful bed!'

Polly said, with truth, that she should be delighted to sleep on the parlor table.

Angenette said that they could give her the mantel-bed on which she and her mother slept, which perhaps seemed more like a real bed than the parlor table, but with inexperienced persons that had a way of folding up and standing them on their heads and causing them to fear that they were going to be suffocated. She felt that they were going to be suffocated. She felt that she could not be thankful enough that Miss Maybury, their lodger, had left before Uncle Elias came. If he had been folded up in the bed she was sure he would never have sent her to college! And he was so heavy that they could not possibly have given him the parlor bed.

There was still a great difficulty. Uncle Elias had been inquiring into their cooking!

Angenette whispered, looking fearfully towards the door as she held Polly's hand nervously, in the little entry-way that was scarcely wide enough for two:

'Mother and I are so afraid that he will suspect that it is a bought Christmas dinner! We are going to get a roasted turkey at the delicatessen shop around the corner, and the vegetables will be canned. We knew you wouldn't mind, but he likes an old-fashioned Christmas dinner. He spoke so scornfully of some people who had their Thanksgiving pudding brought from the baker's in a box! He said there wasn't any sacredness about the day when you ate pudding out of a box! He said you wouldn't catch him to eat such stuff. Oh, Polly, do you suppose he will know that our Christmas pudding comes out of a box?'

Aunt Adeline suddenly opened the parlor door and ushered the two girls into the little box-like room which seemed to be filled to overflowing by Uncle Elias' imposing presence.

He was a large man with a dignity that elevated his countryfied aspect into something to be admired and a face whose sternness was unmitigated until one was acquainted with the latent twinkle in his eye. Polly did not even catch a glimpse of the twinkle at first, and her impression was that Angenette's hopes were vain—doubly vain with a make-shift housekeeping that could not be concealed from such keen eyes as looked out from under Uncle Elias' shaggy brows.

'Uncle Elias wants to hear the Christmas music,' said Angenette, when the old man had given Polly one of his sharp glances and a strong handshake and said he believed he knew 'whose little gal' she was. 'I will take you both to-night where the music is glorious. And to-morrow forenoon we will go to our church, where the music is always fine on Christmas day.'

'But I was calculating to stay at home and help your mother and you get dinner Christmas day' said Uncle Elias. 'I know it's considerable work to get a Christmas dinner. I guess going to-night will do for me, anyhow.'

Polly saw the anxiety and dismay on Angenette's face and an idea dawned upon her. She put it away at first; to carry it out involved so great a disappointment. But so much more than Christmas music was at stake for Angenette!

She followed Angenette into the dining-room when she went to lay the cloth for supper. 'I will get a real old-fashioned

Christmas dinner ready to-night, while you are gone to church,' she said. 'We always get ours ready the night before. The turkey will be dressed and ready for the pan, the pudding in its bag, ready to pop into the pot! And all the vegetables prepared so there will be scarcely anything to do to-morrow. I can even make an apple and a squash pie; he won't think it is Christmas without those. I'm very quick and oh, I love to do it!' Polly's eyes sparkled. The exercise of real talent, the joy of being mistress of the situation, especially when the situation was critical, were almost enough to make one oblivious of a great disappointment.

'But I can't let you!' cried Angenette, the eager hope fading that Polly's words had at first kindled in her face. 'To let you stay at home and drudge when you came to hear the Christmas music—that would be abominable of me! Besides, it would be deceitful. I couldn't let Uncle Elias think that mother and I had got the dinner when you did!'

'I never heard that hosts were obliged to tell who their cook was,' said Polly, stoutly. 'Anyway, he wouldn't get dyspepsia or think he did. I really think it is our duty to save him from that! And I'm not at all sure that I should relish a ready-made Christmas dinner myself! I know I don't like pudding out of a box.'

'You don't care in the least what you have for dinner—you know you don't!' said Angenette dismally. And then she suddenly burst into tears. 'It would mean a great deal to me, Polly, to be able to give Uncle Elias a real Christmas dinner! But I can't bear to have you miss the music. I should certainly stay at home and help you, anyway.'

'You'll have to bear it!' said Polly, very promptly, 'and I shall get a lot of fun out of it. How should I feel to hide my light under a bushel in the very nick of time! And you certainly shan't stay at home. In the first place, your uncle would be very likely to stay if you did; I don't think he is much in the way of going out in the evening; and in the next place I can't be bothered with you! I know all about your great mathematical ability, Mistress Angenette, but I have no confidence in your cookery! All I ask of you is to go to a provision store, instead of your delicatessen shop, and order the things.'

Uncle Elias, Aunt Adeline and Angenette had gone off to hear the Christmas music and Polly, in a big calico apron, with her sleeves rolled up, was mistress of the kitchen.

She was sifting and paring and chopping and stirring, as fast as she could—there was not a moment to lose; and yet, when the chimes began to play in the church belfry, that was almost on a level with the flat, she opened the window and stood still to listen, the chopping tray still in her hand—it was such an unexpected blessing that Aunt Adeline had a chopping tray!

'Calm on the listening ear of night
Come heaven's melodious strains'—

The chimes were like a heavenly voice coming through the frosty stillness. Polly sang, softly, the words of the old hymn to the bells' accompaniment.

Suddenly behind her a thin, husky tenor, just like Deacon Pengo's, and pathetic, as an old voice is, took up the strain:

'Where wild Judea stretches far
Her silver-mantled plains.'

Polly cried out in dismay. If she had only kept the window shut and attended to her work, she might have heard him come in and prevented this disaster of discovery! When she would have shut the window he stayed her hand and sang on:

'The answering hills of Palestine
Send back the glad reply'—

Almost without her will Polly's voice rose and the little kitchen was flooded with melody. All the verses they sang—the thin, husky tenor and the young, rich contralto.

Polly felt the holier claim over the blue depths of Galilee and saw the waving of Sharon's groves of palms—and was oblivious of the burning squash until its fumes were choking.

Then she sprang suddenly to the stove.

'Oh, the squash! it's spoiled and it will take so long to cook more for the pie!' she cried, snatching the smoking kettle from the fire.

'So you're cooking the Christmas dinner,' said Uncle Elias. 'Now I have some hopes of it. I was expecting 'twould be ready-cooked stuff that would lay me up for a week. Here! give me an apron and I will help you. My mother used to say I was as handy as a girl. My niece Angenette is good for nothing, like her mother before her!'

'Oh—oh—you wouldn't say that if you knew her as I do!' cried Polly, pausing impressively in the act of scraping the squash kettle. 'She is such a fine scholar; there was no girl like her in the whole school! I never knew any girl with such brains. I'm sure she will do something wonderful if she can only go to college.'

Polly was dismayed by the temerity of this hint as soon as she had uttered it; but she could not help it, since it seemed to her that Angenette's opportunity had been lost by her carelessness.

'Humph! it's my opinion, that a girl that can't get a Christmas dinner isn't fit to go to college,' growled Uncle Elias.

'Oh, but she could learn that so easily!' cried Polly, eagerly. 'It just comes if you are brought up to it. She wasn't brought up to it, that's all. I was, and I can't do anything else. I made her let me stay at home and get the dinner. It's always fun to do the thing you can do well.'

'You can sing!' said Uncle Elias, and there was the gruffness of real feeling in his voice. 'I don't know when I've had such a treat. I came home from the church they took me to because I didn't care anything about their hifalutin' performances. You can sing the old hymns. I'm glad you've got through chopping, because we can sing some more. Here, give me that squash to pare and let's sing!'

Uncle Elias tied a long calico apron all around his neck—queerly enough, Polly thought, he looked more dignified than ever with that apron on!—and they pared squash and dressed the turkey and stirred up the pudding—and sang! Uncle Elias' whole soul was in his voice and the thin, husky tenor was sweet. Polly subdued

her strong contralto to harmonize with it, and even aesthetic ears could not have scorned the melody that had an accompaniment of boiling and bubbling kettles and all the homely labor of the Christmas cooking. They sang, 'While shepherds watched their flocks by night' and the solemn gladness of the glory that shone all around seemed to come into the little steaming kitchen. And 'Hark, the herald angels sing' brought into it all the joy of the great festival and the fellowship of men of good will.

'I never had such a Christmas-y time in my life;!' said Polly when they had finished singing, all over again, 'Calm on the listening ear of night,' which was Uncle Elias' favorite.

But just at that moment Angenette and Aunt Adeline came in, and the sense that all was lost was in both their faces.

'You missed it, going outside for your Christmas music,' said Uncle Elias as he tied the string tightly around the pudding-bag. 'She's got it in her! She can get a Christmas dinner, too, with me to help her. I haven't had such a good time since I was a boy and helped my mother get dinner and she said I did it a great deal better than you could, Adeline!' Polly's heart had sunk and her conscience was smiting her. She feared that she had not said all that she could for Angenette, that she had not made Uncle Elias see he ought to send her to college.

Angenette sent Uncle Elias and Polly off to church the next morning, insisting that she could cook the dinner now that it was all prepared. Polly had baked her pies, but still she trembled for the dinner. As she said to herself, 'So many things may happen when people do not know how.'

But to stay at home would be to impress the idea of Angenette's incapability upon Uncle Elias' mind and that would never do. Moreover, to go to church with him would give her an opportunity to try to make him realize how clever Angenette was—what a great credit she might be to him if he would only send her to college.

They went to a plain, out-of-the-way church where was the simple service and the old-fashioned music that Uncle Elias loved and, when they were coming home, Polly made bold to tell him again how fine a scholar Angenette was.

'Oh, I know she's got book learning if she can't cook a dinner,' said Uncle Elias, a little impatiently. 'Maybe more book learning would help her to cook a dinner if she had to, as you say, and maybe it wouldn't. Anyhow, I'm going to pay her way through college and see what she will amount to. But she won't amount to anything and my sister won't stand it if they go starving, along on ready-made victuals. Angenette says you want to take music lessons and I expect you've got too much sense to let it spoil you for singing the good old tunes. What I would like would be for you to come and live with my sister and Angenette and kind of see that they had something to eat and let me pay your way and for your music-lessons. You're young and I expect you can stand that kind of living where you don't know whether the chair you're sitting in won't turn into a table and sprawl you out. Anyhow, my sister Adeline has got to be genteel. Angenette thinks it would be a real

beautiful plan; we were talking about it this morning. She told me how you would stay at home to get the Christmas dinner ready so's't I shouldn't find out that they had ready-made turkey and pudding out of a box. I liked her better for saying it right out. Showed she hadn't caught it from the furniture yet to pretend to be something that she wan't! I guess you and she will be kind of good for one t'other.

'Pay me!—oh, yes, you can pay me when you're a great singer if you're a mind to. But don't you never let me hear you sing hifalutin' pieces! And don't you never forget, either, how to get a good dinner. I don't want to have any hand in spoiling a good cook, even to make a great singer. I don't know as I should have wanted to help you if I hadn't found out that you could sing and cook, too!'

Polly rushed into the kitchen and waltzed Angenette around to keep from making a scene, with joyful tears. Aunt Adeline did let a tear splash upon the stork she was embroidering upon a belated Christmas screen—because things were turning out so beautifully.

Polly sobered suddenly to a sense of scorching gravy. But it was no misfortune that she was obliged to make more, for one could not have any confidence in Angenette's gravy. Angenette said she couldn't, herself.

But the Christmas dinner was a great success. There had been one mishap. Angenette had let the water boil out of the pot and the pudding had stuck to the bottom and burned a little. But they served Uncle Elias from the top of the pudding, and he never knew that anything had happened to it.

A Christmas Conscience.

(J. L. Harbour, in the 'Youth's Companion'.)

All the neighbors thought it strange when Bertram Dodge, after the death of his widowed mother, announced his intention to remain at the old home place with his little sister Helen, who was but five years old.

'We shall manage very well together,' Bert had said concerning the offer of some distant relatives to adopt Helen.

'It was mother's wish and it is my wish that Helen and I should not be separated. I may be standing in her light by not allowing her to go into a fine, luxurious home, but I can give her more real affection than they can give her, and she shall not suffer for want of food or clothing. They would want to change her name if she went to them, and that I could not have. No, we'll stay together, won't we, little sister?' He stooped and kissed the blue-eyed, flaxen-haired little girl as he spoke.

Old Mrs. Hooper, to whom he had been talking, said, 'I don't know but you are right, Bert; and there's one good thing, you know more about cooking and house-keeping than many girls know. Having to help your mother so much, especially when she was bedfast all those last ten weeks, has been a good thing for you. You've got a real woman's faculty for doing things.'

This was true, although dishwashing and cooking and sweeping and kindred du-

ties were as repugnant to Bert Dodge as they would be to any boy; but poverty had obliged him to do these things, and he had done them cheerfully and well.

The house was a tiny red and white one in the suburbs of a small New England town. There was only one dwelling very near it, and that was just across the road—a tiny wooden building where lived the Widow Hawes and her seven noisy, rollicking children, whose boisterous fun did not disturb their warm-hearted, easy-going mother in the least.

It was a mystery to her neighbors how she ever found room for so many children in such a tiny box of a house. When they said as much to her she laughed her loud, cheery laugh, and said:

'There isn't much room in my house, but there's room enough in my heart.'

Bert's determination to remain at the old house and to keep Helen with him was partly due to the fact that Mrs. Hawes had encouraged him to do so.

'I'll help you all I can,' she said, 'and Helen can come over and play with my little Susie and Maggie and the others



'HE SEEMED SO ANXIOUS TO HAVE A DOLL.'

when you have to be away at work. She won't be any trouble or in the least in the way.'

Bert was thus able to accept any temporary employment he could find. He was a robust boy of seventeen and willing to work. It was not easy to find employment in a small town like Horton, and simple as his wants and Helen's were, he did not find it easy to supply them, and there were the debts caused by his mother's long sickness and funeral to be paid.

'If I could only get steady work somewhere I should be all right,' Bert often said to the Widow Hawes.

'Oh, you will, before long,' she always returned, cheerfully. 'One who is as willing to work as you are is always in demand, sooner or later.'

But there had been no demand for Bert in any permanent position when the long and cold New England winter had fairly set in, and occasional work became more difficult to find.

Helen and Bert were eating their very frugal breakfast one cold and snowy morning in December, when Helen said, 'What you s'pose Santa Claus will bring me Christmas, Bertie?'

The question startled Bert a little, for he had that very moment been thinking

of Christmas, and of his inability to buy a quarter of the things he wanted to get for Helen.

'I don't know, dearie,' he said.

'Oh, Bertie!' she exclaimed, with a startled look, 'you don't suppose I'll not get anything in my stocking!'

'Oh, you shall have something, little one.'

'What, Bertie?'

'What do you want most?'

'A big, big doll with really and truly hair, and eyes that will open and shut! And if it could speak when you squeeze it I'd like it better! And if it had on a really truly hat! And shoes—Oh, Bertie, I'd want it to have shoes most of anything! The kind that would come off and on! And a little muff to put its hands in! Oh, Bertie, if I could have a dolly like that I wouldn't want anything else! You s'pose I could?'

'We'll see about it.'

'I've got two cents to send to Santa Claus for it. Would it cost more than that?'

'Oh, yes; much more.'

'I want it awfully,' she said, with a sweet seriousness that clinched Bert's resolve.

Ten minutes later a knock came at the door. When Bert opened it he found Jason Woods outside.

'Haven't time to come in,' he said. 'Got anything to do now, Bert?'

'No, sir; I haven't.'

'Want a job?'

'Yes; very much.'

'Well, I can give you two or three weeks' work down at my sawmill. Joe Hill, who has been helping me, fell and broke his arm yesterday, and I must have some one to help me get out a lot of lumber I've contracted for. Do you want the place?'

'Yes, I should be glad of it.'

'All right. Come down to the mill right away and I'll set you to work. We ought to be there now.'

Bert did not wait to wash the breakfast dishes. He wrapped Helen up warmly, and carried her over to Mrs. Hawes's for the day, and half an hour later was at work with Jason Woods.

It was hard, cold work in the old sawmill, and Jason Woods was a hard taskmaster, but Bert bore the faultfinding in silence, and did his utmost to please. He kept steadily in mind the thought of the happy Christmas he should be able to give Helen as the result of his labor. The doll, he planned, should go into her stocking; and he would get her some little toys for the tree they were going to have at Mrs. Hawes's.

He had promised Helen that the doll should surely come. His work at the sawmill would be finished two days before Christmas, and he had planned to walk seven miles to Hillsboro,—a much larger town than Horton,—where he was sure that he could find just such a doll as Helen had described.

Jason Woods owed Bert twenty dollars when the time for which he had been hired was up, but when the last day and the last hour's work was done Jason was not ready to pay.

'Well, Bert,' he said, 'I'll say for ye that you've done your work first-rate, and I'll hire you again if I need any one. I owe you twenty dollars, don't I?'

'Yes, sir.'

'That's the way I figure it out. Well, you come over to my house the first day of January and I'll have the money for you. I won't get the money on this contract until then, and my folks have dinged all my ready money away from me for their Christmas nonsense.'

Bert was too much surprised and disappointed to speak for a moment. Then he said, 'If you could let me have just a part of it.'

'Don't see how I can, Bert. I need all the money I've got on hand. It's only about a week until the first of January. I guess you'll have to wait. Wish you'd pile up them boards behind you before you go. I've got to be off right now.'

He took his overcoat from a peg in the wall near the door of the sawmill, and departed without noticing how Bert's lips quivered as he said, 'All right, sir.'

But in his heart Bert thought that it was all wrong. He had been so sure of receiving his money that when the mill had been stopped for repairs one day of the previous week he had walked to Hillsboro, and selected the doll and some other things for Helen, fearing that the best of everything would be gone if he waited until the day before Christmas. Having found just such a doll as Helen had described—no other like it was left in the only toy store in Hillsboro—he had had it and a few other toys put aside for him in a box, for which he had promised to call by twelve o'clock on the day before Christmas.

'And now I can't get them,' he said, bitterly. 'They'll be sold to some one else if I'm not there by noon. Oh, it's meaner than mean for Jason Woods to keep me out of my money. He is the richest man in town. He could pay me if he would! Poor little Helen! I haven't a cent with which to keep my promise to her, and there's only one day between now and Christmas! The child will be so disappointed! And I wanted to get some little things to put on the tree for the Hawes children. Their mother has been so good to Helen and me!'

He brushed the tears from his eyes with the back of his rough, red hand as he went into the mill to get his old overcoat, which was worn beyond repair. It hung on a peg close to the one from which Jason Woods had taken his own thick, warm overcoat. Bert set down his little tin dinner-pail, and when he stooped to pick it up he saw a little roll of green paper lying by the pail.

'Why! it's money!' he exclaimed. He smoothed out the little roll and found it to consist of four almost new five-dollar bills.

'Twenty dollars! Exactly what he owes me!' exclaimed Bert. 'And Jason Woods said he didn't have any money! This belongs to me by all that is fair and just! It is my rightful due! It is mine! I'll tell him boldly that I found the money, and kept it because I had a right to it! Now Helen can have her doll! I'll go to Hillsboro to-morrow!'

If Jason Woods had a 'soft spot' in his heart it was for his little granddaughter Marjorie, who was just the age of Helen Dodge. Hence Jason entered the toy store in Hillsboro on the day before Christmas in search of things for Marjorie's stockings.

'She wanted me to get her a big doll

with real hair and real shoes, a doll that would make a noise, and open and shut its eyes, and she wanted it to have on a hat and a muff to put its hands in.'

'Well, I've only one doll of that kind left, Mr. Woods,' said the proprietor. 'And I don't know that I ought to tell it. You see it's like this: A lad of sixteen or seventeen came in here and bought the doll and some other things one day last week, and had them put aside for him, saying that he would come for them by noon to-day. I don't often sell goods that way, particularly to strangers, but this was such an honest-looking boy, and he seemed so anxious to have the doll and other things saved for him until to-day that I agreed to do it. By the way, he said that he was working for a man over in Horton, where you live, and that he'd get his pay last night. He said he wanted the doll for his little sister. He looked as if he'd better spend the two dollars the doll cost on clothes for himself. Well, it's now after one o'clock and he said he'd be here by noon, so I feel free to sell it. I can't have an expensive doll like that left on my hands.'

He took a box from under the counter as he spoke and said, 'Here it is with his name on it—Bertram D. Dodge. Maybe you know him.'

'Yes, I do.'

'Do you suppose he'll come for all these things?'

'I can't say, probably not.'

'Maybe he didn't get the money he expected to get last night.'

'No, he—he—maybe he didn't.'

'Well, I guess you may have the doll. But I can't help feeling a little sorry for the boy. He had a good face, and I know his heart was set on having the doll. He'll be awfully disappointed if somebody has kept him out of his money. That's a thing I couldn't do; but I suppose there are plenty of people who will take advantage of a boy when they would hardly care to ask a man to wait for his pay. Excuse me a few minutes while I wait on that lady.'

As Jason Woods looked at the doll and the few cheap little things in the box, his slumbering conscience awoke. He thought how hard and faithfully Bert had worked, and he remembered now that the boy had looked almost frightened when told that he was not to get his money the evening before. When the proprietor of the store came back Jason said:

'I'll take that box of things just as it is, and the next best doll you've got.'

Half an hour later the owner of the sawmill was on his way home. It was very cold, and it had begun to snow. He had driven about three miles when he came to a boy sitting on a log by the roadside, who called out excitedly:

'Stop, Mr. Woods, stop! I want to see you!'

Bert thrust his hand into his pocket, and brought forth a roll of bills. 'Here,' he said, 'I'm sure this money belongs to you. There's twenty dollars of it. I found it in the sawmill last night. I've been sitting on that log two hours trying to make myself think I had a right to keep it because you owed me that much. Here's the money. I beg your pardon for keeping it so long. I did wrong.'

'Put the money into your pocket, Bert. It belongs to you, for I owe it to you. Get

into the sleigh and let me carry you back home. I've got the doll and the other things you had put aside at the toy store. I am going to be little Helen's Santa Claus this year and yours, too. You worked overtime several days, and I didn't allow you anything for it, so I've made it up to you in a Christmas present of a new overcoat that I've got under the sleigh seat. Get up there, Nell, what's the matter with you?'

A Real Santa Claus With Live Reindeer.

'The Work at Home' quotes a part of a letter from Dr. Sheldon Jackson, written from the Reindeer Station, not far from the A. M. A. mission at Cape Prince of Wales, in which he tells this story of how a live Santa Claus made a midnight visit with a team of reindeer in the far north:

I told the children about Santa Claus, asking them to tie their fur stockings up near their beds, as he was coming to visit them for the first time and would remember every child.

I made up a lot of little bags out of empty flour sacks, and into each one put eight cubes of white sugar, about a dozen pieces of dried apples and a dozen raisins—not a very appropriate assortment for a Christmas present for a white child, but it was the best we had, and I found afterwards the selection was much appreciated by the little Eskimo. Although our supplies were very limited, I concluded to take enough from such as we had and to give each family the same assortment. It was made up of a tin can filled with flour, eight navy biscuits, one pint of rice, one-half pound of sugar and one-third of a pound of tea.

There are ten houses in the village, and about 100 persons all told. The supplies above enumerated were made up into ten packages. I had the herders harness one of our deer teams to a sled, and at twelve o'clock started with four natives for the village, a half mile west of the station. When we reached the first house I took a flash-light view of the deer, standing just by the little skin window, through which a faint gleam of light was thrown from the oil lamp burning below.

It occurred to me that perhaps this was the first time in the history of civilization that a live Santa Claus made his visit upon an errand of mercy with a team of reindeer, and that the Eskimo were the first actually to experience what throughout Christendom is only a myth.

It became necessary to dig away the frost from one corner of the window in order to get the packages through, and in nearly every instance the operation alarmed those below, when a package was immediately dropped down and they became quiet. I peeped through their little skin windows and saw them dancing around in high glee, old and young, and expressing their thankfulness for the many good things received, the like of which they had never before eaten. The hour I spent in this service was one of supreme delight, for the little handful of food I distributed made the bright eyes of one hundred people glisten with happy

Saved in a Basket, or Daph and Her Charge.

CHAPTER II.

'THE MARTHA JANE.'

There was the bustle of departure on board an American schooner, which some hope of gain had brought to the southern island named in our last chapter. The fresh and favorable breeze hurried the preparations of the sailors, as they moved about brim full of glad thoughts of return to their distant home.

The boat which had been sent ashore for some needful supplies, was fast approaching the vessel, and in it, among the rough

laid his hand on the basket, and had well-nigh torn away its cover. The joke might have proved a dangerous one for him. A blow from Daph's strong arm sent him staggering backwards, and in another moment the negress had seized an oar, and was brandishing it round her head, threatening with destruction anyone who should dare to touch her property, and declaring that with the captain, and with him alone, would she treat for the chickens, about which so much had been said.

'Cap'ain,' she said, as a tall, firmly-knit man drew near the scene of the trouble, 'Cap'ain, it's you, sah, I wants to speak wid, and just you by yourself, away from these fellows, who don't know how to treat

To that spot Daph followed the captain, her basket on her head, and her firm step and consequential air seeming to say to the sailors—'You see, your captain knows better than you do how to treat such a person as I am.'

When they were once within the little enclosure, Daph's manner changed. She put down her precious basket, and, looking the captain directly in the eye, she said, solemnly, 'Cap'ain, would you see a man struggle for his life in de deep water, outside da, and nebber lift your hand to save him? Would you see a house on fire, and sweet baby-children burning in it, and just look on to see the awsome blaze, and nebber stir to save de dear babies. Cap'ain I'se brought you a good work to do. Dey say de great Lord bless dem dat cares for little children. Promise you won't tell de dreassome secret I'se going to tell you! Promise! time is short!'

The kind-hearted captain was impressed by the earnest manner of the woman, and not a little curious to hear the secret that seemed to fill her with such strong feelings. 'I promise,' said he, simply; 'go on!'

'The darkies in dis island,' said Daph, slowly, 'de darkies are crazy for de blood of der masters. Poor, wicked darkies! Dey means to have enough of it to-night! By to-morrow morning, de white faces on dis coast will ebbery one be white with de death whiteness! Old folks and little children—dey mean to kill dem all! Dey told Daph deir secret, as if dey thought she was all black—inside and out. De Lord forgib Daph dat she did not strike dem down where dey stood showing deir teeth, at the thought of living in master's house and he cold in de grave. Dear massa and missus are up in de country, and Daph couldn't get word to them, but something in here said, "You can save the sweet babies, Daph"; so I made as if I was ready to kill dose I loves de best, and set to work a-contriving how a poor, foolish darkey could save dose sweet lambs. Your men was always glad to take Daph's chickens, and so de way seemed open. I'se put my darlings in de basket, and here dey are for you to take care ob for de Lord, and he'll reckon wid you for it. It ain't likely dey'll have any friends to stand by 'em, and thank ye for it,'cept one poor darkey named Daph!'

In a twinkling Daph had torn off the cover of the basket, and there lay the sleeping children, calm and still as if on their mother's bosom.

'Dey do breave, de sweet dears!' said Daph, as she bent tenderly over them.

Great tears fell from the eyes of honest Captain Jones. He was an old sailor, but to salt water in this form he had long been a stranger. He tried to speak, but the voice that had been heard above the tumult of many a storm was now choked and husky. In an instant he regained his self-command, and said, 'You have found the right man, Daph. No harm shall come to them so long as my name is Jeremiah Jones! The 'Martha Jane' can skim the water like a wild duck, and will be off towards a better country before ten minutes are over.'

The words were hardly out of Captain Jones's mouth before he left his tent-like cabin and in a moment he was heard giving orders for instant departure.

(To be continued.)



DAPH AND THE CREW OF THE 'MARTHA JANE'.

tars, was Daph, her precious basket at her side, and her bright eyes passing from face to face with an eager, wistful glance, that seemed trying to read the secrets of each heart.

'Here! go-a-head, woman! I'll hand up your chickens,' said one of the sailors, as they reached the anchored schooner.

'I keeps my chickens to myself,' said Daph, as she placed the basket on her head, and went up the side of the vessel as steadily and securely as the oldest tar of all.

As soon as she set her foot on deck, the sailors thronged around her, offering to take her chickens from her at her own price, and passing their rough jokes on her stout figure and shining black face. One young sailor, bolder than the rest,

a 'spectable darkey, who belongs to the greatest gentleman in the island. Let me see you in your little cubby there, and if you have an heart in you, we'll make a bargain.'

There was something so earnest in the woman's manner, that Captain Jones at once consented to her odd request, smiling at himself as he did so.

A kind of temporary cabin had been put up on deck for the protection of the captain from the hot rays of the southern sun. It was but a rude framework, covered with sail-cloth; and yet when the canvas door was closed, it formed a pleasant and cool place of retirement for an afternoon nap, or for the transaction of private business.

LITTLE FOLKS

Three Little Girls.

A CHRISTMAS STORY.

(“Child’s Paper.”).

Three little girls stood before the window of a large toy-shop, looking at its contents. One child was dressed warmly and richly. The girl next her was also dressed warmly, but plainly. The third child looked shabby, and her clothes not warm enough for the season.

Alice Daily, the second in the row, knew both the others. She was in the same Sunday-school

there?’ Alice said; and Maggie fairly gasped, ‘She said there wasn’t anything here that she wanted, that girl did!’

Alice laughed. ‘Oh, that’s because she has got everything ’most already. I’ve been at her house’—this in a very self-satisfied tone—‘and you never saw such a lot of playthings as she’s got only in stores. Her father’s real rich, you see, and she can have ’most anything she wants.’

‘How many dollies has she got?’ asked Maggie.

‘Dolls! Oh, ever and ever so many! I counted fourteen or six-

as she imagined them lying about lonely and forlorn.

As Alice watched her companion, an idea formed in her curly head.

‘Well, good-by,’ she said; ‘I must go now.’

The next day was Sunday, and Alice and Gertrude came out of church together.

‘You know the little girl that was looking in the window at Blair’s with us yesterday, Gertie. Well, her name is Maggie Beale.’

‘Oh, is it?’ returned Gertrude with interest.

‘Yes,’ said Alice quite encouraged, ‘and she’s awful poor.’

‘She looked so,’ Gertrude replied. Alice went on with an effort, ‘Yes, and she hasn’t much of anything to play with, and only two old dolls.’

‘Is that so?’

‘Yes, and so I was thinking about those dolls up in your attic, you know; she’d be real glad of some of ’em Christmas, I expect.

Gertrude faced about indignantly. ‘Why, Alice Daily,’ she exclaimed, ‘do you suppose I’d give away old broken dolls for Christmas presents? I’d have thrown ’em into the ash-barrel long ago, only I’d played with them when I was little, and I hated to.’

‘Well,’ said Alice more boldly, ‘I suppose she would like one that isn’t broken just as well.’

‘Probably she would,’ returned Gertrude. ‘You might give her one of yours.’ Then they reached the corner, and she went one way and Alice went another.

Alice was indignant, too, at Gertrude’s suggestion. ‘I’ve only got six dolls,’ she said to herself, ‘and she’s got sixteen.’

But she could not forget what Gertrude said, and the next day she brought out her beloved family of dolls. But each seemed to be very dear to her, and not one of the six could she make up her mind to give away.

‘I suppose I might take fifty cents of the money Uncle Fred gave me on my birthday, and buy Maggie a nice new one,’ she said to herself; ‘but I need it, every single bit, to get Christmas presents. Oh, dear me! What does make Gertrude so stingy? I’d be ashamed!’

However, she decided to buy the



class with Gertrude Otis, whose father was a banker, and she went to the same day-school as Maggie Beale, whose father was dead, and whose mother supported herself and children by washing and ironing.

Alice directed her remarks to Gertrude, until the latter exclaimed, ‘Well, there isn’t anything here I would want, anyhow. I’m going over to Ford’s to see what they have,’ and she turned away.

‘Some pretty things here, aren’t

teen; I’ve forgotten which; and there were a lot of old ones up in the attic.’

Fourteen or sixteen dolls! Maggie’s thin face flushed at the very thought. She did love dollies so, and she had just two; one a rag doll, old and battered, and the other a very small one with a china head. She enjoyed these, but to think of fourteen, maybe sixteen, nice ones, too! And then those poor dolls up in the attic! Her motherly little heart fairly ached

doll, and with a little help from an older sister, dressed it prettily. When all was done she looked at it with shining eyes.

'Isn't it just lovely, mama?' she exclaimed. 'Won't Maggie be pleased?'

Brother Tom got interested, too, and he whittled some things. Then a bright thought struck him.

'I know where there are some pretty little pine trees up near Slater's pond. I'll bring one of them home, and we'll have a Christmas spread for Maggie. Her mother says she has sprained her ankle, so it can't be a very gay holiday-time for her at the best.'

Tom was as good as his word. A dainty little tree was found and trimmed, and just before dark on Christmas eve he and Alice carried it to Maggie's home.

How Maggie's eyes sparkled as she looked at her treasures, and then, catching up her crutch, she tripped gayly to the other side of the room, exclaiming:

'And just see here, too! These came from Gertrude Otis. I'm not going to touch them till mamma gets home from work and sees them, but look at them every little while.'

There on the table was a large box, containing a complete wardrobe for Maggie, from warm, bright hood to stout boots, and besides there was a lovely doll with golden curls.

'It's larger than yours,' said Maggie with a shy smile, 'but it isn't a bit prettier, and I shall love them both alike. How good everybody has been!'

'Well, now, who's the one to be ashamed, I'd like to know!' Alice exclaimed to herself a little later. 'You'd better be careful after this, Alice Daily, how you call folks stingy and other things that ain't nice, till you know for sure any way.'

Rusty Blackbird's Christmas (By Hope Daring).

'It's beginning to snow. Oh dear, oh dear! How I am going to get through the winter is more than I can tell.'

Rusty Blackbird stood on one foot, the other drawn up among his brownish-black feathers. He spread his wings and took refuge in the depths of the fir trees which grew in Farmer Steward's yard.

'It ought not to be so cold here, it really ought not,' he fretted. 'I had a right to expect different things.'

It is easier to find fault with others than to own we are wrong. When there is nothing else to blame the weather will do. If Rusty Blackbird had told the exact truth, he would have said:

'It serves me right for trying to winter here. I thought I knew best, and here I am.'

'Snowing, is it?' piped the Snowbird. He had hurt his wing a week before, and found it very difficult to fly.

'Yes.'

It was a gruff reply, and Snowbird shivered. At last he spoke again.

'I hope the snow will not be deep. Yet it is selfish for me to wish that just because it is hard for me to get food. The children enjoy the snow so much, and tomorrow is Christmas.'

'The children!' Rusty Blackbird's voice was a discordant cry. 'I hate children. As a family we have nothing to do with them. Our nests are always ten feet or more from the ground, so as to be safe from these same children.'

'Blackbirds live all about here,' Snowbird said timidly.

'They are Red-Wings, and only our cousins. Well, I must go over to the barn and see if I can find some grain.'

Snowbird sighed. 'I'm so hungry, but I don't believe I can fly to the barn.'

'Why, you'll starve if you don't,' and he flew away.

It snowed all night. When daylight came the earth was covered with a mantle of white.

The fir trees were planted in a circle, the long branches making of the inner circle a beautiful house. In warm weather little Nellie had her playhouse in the shady nook. Even that morning the enclosure was free from snow.

'I wish I was down there,' Snowbird said; 'perhaps I could find a crumb.'

Rusty Blackbird heard, but he only murmured:

'You might as well give up. It will be hard work for even me to find food this morning.'

Just then little Nellie entered the enclosure.

'Good morning, birdies, dear!' and the little face was uplifted. 'You are there, even if I don't see you. I wish you a merry Christmas, for this is the day when the dear Christ child came to the earth. To be like him we must be kind to others, so I've brought you a Christmas breakfast and a dinner, too. I'll feed you every day,' and she scattered crumbs and wheat on the ground, and fastened a small sheaf of wheat where the birds could pick it.

'Merry Christmas, birdies, goodbye!' Nellie called, waving her hand.

Rusty Blackbird peered through the green branches, watching her as long as he could see her scarlet cloak.

Christmas! Kind and helpful to others! There was Snowbird.

'I've been selfish,' he thought. 'Well, Christmas is a good time to commence to be better.'

He fluttered to the earth. Seizing a tempting crumb, he rose to the spot where Snowbird sat.

'Hear, dear, take this.'

'Oh, thank you, thank you! I don't believe I can fly down there.'

'You don't need to. I will feed you,' and a moment later another crumb was waiting Snowbird's pleasure.

'You're so good!' the lame bird murmured. 'And it's Christmas.'

'Yes, it's Christmas.' Rusty Blackbird's voice was no longer discordant, but clear and gleeful.

Nellie was on the porch. She understood what the "tehach, tehach" of the bird meant, for she nodded her brown head and said:

'Yes, it's Christmas.'

—'Michigan Christmas Advocate.'

NORTHERN MESSENGER PREMIUMS.

A reliable and handsome Fountain Pen, usually sold at \$2.00, manufactured by Sandford & Bennett, New York, given to 'Messenger' subscribers for a list of six new subscriptions to the 'Northern Messenger' at 30 cents each.

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Christmas Bells.

Why do bells for Christmas ring?
Why do little children sing?

Once a lovely shining star,
Seen by shepherds from afar,
Gently moved until its light
Made a manger cradle bright.
There a darling Baby lay
Pillowed soft upon the hay;
And its mother sang and smiled,
'This is Christ, the Holy Child.'

This is why the joy-bells ring;
This is why the children sing.

—Eugene Field.



Correspondence

APPRECIATION.

We thank our friends for their words of loving appreciation and encouragement. We have not room for all the letters at once, but we are glad to have heard from Annie Lulu Shaw, John Pangras Kalim, Eva A. Fleming, Nellie Gooding, Bessie Ogilvie, Helen E. L., J. McCaskill, Annie Mary McLeod, D. J. G. L. Bradley, Nes-sie Rea Patterson, Tina Glendenning, L. Maude Phillips, Gertie Rea, Dorothy Rea, Lois A. Sexsmith, Myrtle McManus, Marguerite Hunt, Gladys Malcolm, Gordon B. Baird, W. H. Williams, Mabel Armstrong, Ella Pardy, Annie May Rutter, Stanley Rea, Maurice Setter, Isaac B. Peers, Cleveland Rea, William A. Duncan, Lois Hannah Victoria Porter, Ada A. Butcher, Annie Gilroy, Harris L. Zwicker, Simon A. Campbell, Margaret G. McCully, Ada A. J., Mabel M. Rogers, Gladys E. T., Mildred Colp, Nettie L. McNeil, Lyle P., Leonard J. L., Jessie May Warren, A. M. E. Macdonald, Flora Anderson, Florence Long, F. B. Hubley, Edwin Cullen, Effie B., Mabel S., Effie B. P., Erna E. Bain, and Mabel F. E. M.

Green Oak, Col. Co.

Dear Editor,—I am a little girl ten years old. I live on a farm near the Shubena-cadie river, on which is built the Midland Railway bridge. I have six brothers and two sisters. My eldest brother is in California, and my papa and one of my brothers are lumbering in Shelburne county. We were all there last winter, but as there was no school, we came home again. I live near the schoolhouse, and I go to the school every day, and I am in the fourth book. I have taken the 'Messenger' for a year, and this is the first letter I have written to it.

MAUDE P.

Duck Lake, Ont.

Dear Editor,—The land around here is not very closely settled on account of its being so stony and covered with bush. It is generally used as ranches. We have a ranch with over one thousand acres. We take in ranch cattle in the summer. There is a small lake about a quarter of a mile from our place. It is fine skating on it in the winter. Quite a few hunters hunt around here in the hunting season. But most of the hunters go about fourteen miles farther north, where the game is more plentiful. There was one deer shot on our ranch this year by some hunters who did not go very far back for game. One of my brothers went back to hunt with three other hunters. They got two deer, but they saw quite a few more. There

is a sawmill about three miles from here, and in the winter-time the men are kept busy drawing logs and lumber. Our school is just about five minutes' walk from the lake, and about ten minutes' walk from home. We go to the Methodist Church. It is about a mile from here. We have Sunday-school every Sunday, and church every other Sunday. We are about seven miles from a railway station, and from four to five miles from a store. I go to school most of the time. My birthday was on Nov. 9.

EFFIE B.

Leamington, N.S.

Dear Editor,—I have taken the 'Messenger' for a number of years, and like it very much. My mother used to take it before I got old enough to do so. I live in Leamington, which is about four miles from the town of Springhill. It is a hilly place, and is quite pretty in the summer season. The Maccan River runs through the middle of it. I have only one sister and no brothers. My sister is older than myself, and she is a dressmaker. I belong to the Temperance Lodge. I joined two years ago. I wonder if any other readers of the 'Messenger' belong to one, too. I am fond of reading, and have read a great number of books. My favorite author is E. P. Roe. I am fond of music, too.

ANNIE G. (age 14).

Adair, Indian Territory, U.S.A.

Dear Editor,—I will tell you about our nutting party. Twelve or thirteen of us and our friends went to the woods nutting on a very large hill. After a while the ladies made a fire and cooked the dinner, and while they were doing that the boys and girls took the sacks and gathered as many hickory nuts as they could before dinner. After dinner all of us went to gather hickory nuts. We all filled our sacks. None of us got hurt. As we were coming home they stopped, and the children got out and gathered persimmons and black haws. I wish all the readers of the 'Messenger' could have some of our hickory nuts.

We have organized a literary society in our school, which we will have every other Friday. The Presbyterians of this town are building a new church, and have also bought a nice organ. We hope to be in our new church by Christmas. I am nine years old.

JESSIE MAY W.

Grand View Park.

Dear Editor,—I will try to describe Mellesly's Island. It is seven miles long, and two miles wide; at the widest place. We live at the head of Mellesly's Island, and think it is a nice place. There is a store seven miles away. Our second neighbor lives about a mile away; so you see this part of the island is not very thickly

settled. There is a little island in front of our house, which is said to be the best fishing and duck hunting place around here. We live close to the water, and us children (there are four of us) have nice times on the river. Last summer I caught a pickerel, which weighed, I think, between two and three pounds. I have never caught as big a one as that before. I have caught lots of fish. I have read a lot of books, some of which are: 'Child's Life of Christ,' 'Black Beauty,' 'Beautiful Joe,' 'Chautauqua Girls at Home,' 'Mary, Mary, quite Contrary,' 'Prince of the House of David,' the 'New Testament,' and lots of other books. I am very fond of reading, and I like it better than anything else, unless it is studying. Wishing the 'Messenger' every success. I have enjoyed reading it very much.

MABEL M. R.

Lachine Locks.

Dear Editor,—I am a little girl ten years of age. I live in the town of Lachine, which is situated on the banks of the St. Lawrence river, about nine miles from the city of Montreal. It is very pleasant here in summer. We see all the big boats pass down the canal and river. There are several large iron shops here, and they are still building another, a radiator shop. I go to school every day. I have five sisters and two brothers. I go to the Presbyterian Sunday-school, where I get the 'Messenger' every Sunday.

TINA G.

Erle, Que.

Dear Editor,—I was eight years old on Nov. 19. I am just two days younger than the Grand Duchess Olga of Russia. My mamma once thought of calling me Olga, but papa didn't like that name, so they gave me three names. First, the name of the grandmother of a young man you read of in the New Testament, who knew the scriptures from a child; second, the name of the mother of a prophet who was also a judge in Israel; third, the name of the greatest English Queen. Can any of the boys and girls find out what my names are. I have three brothers and two sisters.

— — — P.

Calder, Ont.

Dear Editor,—I like reading the 'Messenger' very much. Papa has read it ever since 1875, and always likes to see it come to our home. Mamma used to read it for us, but she died on Oct. 31 last, so now we have to read it for ourselves. I go to school every day. We go right along beside the Thames River in the summer, but in the winter we have to go up on the banks, the river comes up so far. I am in the senior fourth class. I intend trying the entrance examination next mid-summer. Papa's birthday is on Dec. 2.

GLADYS M.



LESSON XIII.—DEC. 27.

The Birth of Christ.

Matt. ii., 1-12.

Golden Text.

Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. Matt. ii., 12.

Home Readings.

Monday, Dec. 21.—Matt. ii., 1-12.
 Tuesday, Dec. 22.—Is. ix., 1-7.
 Wednesday, Dec. 23.—Luke ii., 1-17.
 Thursday, Dec. 24.—Micah v., 1-15.
 Friday, Dec. 25.—Luke i., 26-38.
 Saturday, Dec. 26.—Mal. iii., 1-12.
 Sunday, Dec. 27.—Is. vii., 10-16.

OR GENERAL REVIEW.

Psalm ciii.

GOLDEN TEXT.

The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him. Ps. ciii., 17.

HOME READINGS.

Monday, Dec. 21.—II. Sam. vi., 1-12.
 Tuesday, Dec. 22.—II. Sam. vii., 4-16.
 Wednesday, Dec. 23.—II. Sam. xv., 1-12.
 Thursday, Dec. 24.—II. Sam. xviii., 24-33.
 Friday, Dec. 25.—I. Chron. xxviii., 1-10.
 Saturday, Dec. 26.—I. Kings iii., 4-15.
 Sunday, Dec. 27.—I. Kings x., 1-10.

A year ago we were just completing the history of the conquest and settlement of Canaan by Israel, and you will remember that the people had no king at that time, but were, after their settlement in the land, under judges who appeared from time to time to aid them in their difficulties. Israel was surrounded by heathen kingdoms, and soon began to want a king. This desire on their part was displeasing to God, and when the nation asked for a king he protested through Samuel the judge and prophet against such a form of government, but the children of Israel insisting, God yielded to their demand, as it was the only way they could be made to see his wisdom and their own folly.

Let us take up the lives of the first three kings of Israel, in their order, and see what we have learned about them.

SAUL.

What can you say about the prophet Samuel's character? Were his sons like him? Did they have anything to do with the discontent of the people? At what place did the elders of Israel assemble and ask for a king? How was their request received? Where was the nation assembled when the king was chosen? Upon what tribe did the lot fall? What man in the tribe was then chosen? What sort of man was Saul in appearance? Had it ever been indicated to him before this that he was to rule Israel? What was the one great cause of Saul's downfall? Can you give one or more instances of his disobedience? What tribe or people was Saul commissioned to destroy utterly? Did he do so? For what was he rebuked in this campaign? In fighting against what people did Saul come to his death? What was the exact manner of his death?

DAVID.

What do you know about David's early life, his tribe, his family, his occupation, his birthplace? Was David the oldest son of Jesse, or the youngest? Who anointed David to be king? What came upon David

when he had been anointed? What great feat of arms did David perform while still a young man? Was he a regular member of the army at this time? What effect did this have in his relations to the people? What effect did it have upon Saul? What form did Saul's jealousy take? What did he seek to do to David? How was David related to Saul? What loyal friend did David have in Saul's own household? Saul was afraid of David; why was this? What step did Saul take to put David out of his presence? How did the people regard David? How did Jonathan show his friendship for David? What do you think of Jonathan's character? How did David behave when he had Saul in his power, and what was his reason? Did David become king over all Israel at once? Who was set up for a rival king, and how long did he reign? What tribe followed Judah? How long did David reign in Hebron over Judah? What important thing, connected with the religion of the people, did David undertake? Where had the ark been for a long time? What disaster occurred while it was being carried toward Jerusalem? How should the ark have been carried? What great building did David wish to put up? Why was he not allowed to do it? What great promise did God make to David about his throne? Whom did he say should build the temple? What double sin did David commit? Was his penitence sincere? Give in brief the account of Absalom's rebellion. Did David rejoice or not over the death of Absalom? How long did he reign?

SOLOMON.

Was Solomon David's eldest son? Was he proclaimed king before or after his father's death? Why was his accession to the throne hastened? How did the people receive their new king? For what was Solomon especially noted? What did he choose when God gave him the opportunity? At what place did this occur? What great building did Solomon erect? Give some of its characteristics? What king helped him? How long was the temple in building? At what national feast was the temple dedicated? What about the gathering on this occasion? Can you tell something of the exercises? What about the wealth of Solomon and his power and his reign? Who came to see him, and prove his wisdom? Describe her visit.

Next week we take up the New Testament again, the lesson being 'The Boyhood of Jesus.' Luke ii., 40-52.

C. E. Topic

Sunday, Dec. 27.—Topic—An optimists' missionary meeting. Isa. lx., 1-5.

Junior C. E. Topic.

THINGS TO DO NOW.

Monday, Dec. 21.—Study the Bible daily. John v., 39.
 Tuesday, Dec. 22.—Be brave to do right. Josh. i., 9.
 Wednesday, Dec. 23.—Be true to God. I. Sam. xii., 24.
 Thursday, Dec. 24.—Be kind. I. Cor. xiii., 4.
 Friday, Dec. 25.—Choose Christ. Josh. xxiv., 15.
 Saturday, Dec. 26.—A man who put off. Luke ix., 59, 60.
 Sunday, Dec. 27.—Topic—Things we ought not to put off. Eccl. xii., 1, 7.

HOW JOE KELLY KEPT SUNDAY-SCHOOL OPEN ALL WINTER.

(John McMaster, in 'Sunday-school Times'.)

Let me tell you the story of a Sunday-school, and a man with a purpose, that came under my notice many years ago. Our home was in one of the backwoods settlements,—a small town. It was not big enough to support a pastor all the time, and we had to depend on the village Sunday-school for much of the spiritual nourishment we received. There was a church building, but it was out of the way, and it was a hard climb to reach it; so we

built a schoolhouse in the centre of the town, to be more convenient. Here the union Sunday-school met regularly to study the lesson. There was a Bible class for the men, women, and older people, with several grades for the younger classes.

We can never forget the delightful times we spent in that little country schoolhouse. It was a joy in the spring and summer time to be there. But when we had the bad roads in the fall, and winter came with its furious storms and deep snows, and, in some cases, the distances were great, that was the testing time for us. A few faithful men braved the elements, but the discomforts and freezing cold chilled their ardor. The interest lagged, and the serious question came up, 'Shall we close the school in winter?'

This was our condition when a stranger came to our town. He opened a store, and kept a pony for his business. In a short time everyone in town knew Joe Kelly. He was polite, unselfish, and obliging, and, of course, his business increased rapidly. He attended the union Sunday-school, and was much interested in the work. Difficulties seemed to give him an inspiration, and it was his delight to try to overcome them. Obstacles seemed to give a zest to Joe's life, and thus it came to pass that when roads were bad, and snows deep, and howling winds fierce, Joe was equal to the occasion.

On Sunday mornings of such days Joe would pull on his long overstockings and moccasins, give the pony an extra feed of oats, then, when 'hitched up' with a rude box of his own construction, plenty of straw on the bottom and furs on top, Joe would drive round from house to house, and gather up the material necessary to a Sunday-school. When ten o'clock came (the hour for service) all were astonished at the attendance. The meetings that followed the ride on Joe's sleigh were always good ones. Men who would have stayed at home were ashamed into going, and there was an added charm and interest on account of the extra exercise.

And so it came about that some of our very best services were on the very stormiest days. Well do I remember a little girl's calling to her mother, 'Mamma, wish it will be stormy on Sunday, so's to get a ride in Joe's sleigh.' Thus it was that Joe Kelly solved for us the problem, 'Shall our Sunday-school close in winter?' Afterwards this came to be our motto:

'Tender-handed touch a nettle
 And it stings you for your pains;
 Grasp it firm, like men of mettle,
 And it soft as silk remains.'

Our Christmas Greeting.

The publishers of the 'Messenger' wish all its readers a very Merry Christmas, and can do so in no better words than those of Miss Nichols in this little poem:—

'I WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS.'

(L. Adda Nichols, in 'The Michigan Christian Advocate'.)

Because of the song the angels sing,
 Because of the wonderful message they bring,
 I wish you a merry Christmas.

Because of the brilliant Bethlehem star
 That led wise men from the east afar,
 I wish you a merry Christmas.

Because of their adoration paid
 To the infant King in the manger laid,
 I wish you a merry Christmas.

Because all heaven on earth looked down
 That Christmas night in the ancient town,
 I wish you a merry Christmas.

Because of the gift from the Father above,
 Of Christ the Lord and redeeming love
 I wish you a merry Christmas.

Because for you and for me He came,
 Salvation to bring in His own dear name,
 I wish you a merry Christmas.

Dick's Daily Tonic

(The 'War Cry.')

Dick used to be a drunkard. He did not exactly reel round the street every day, nor lie in the gutter, but he could consume an enormous quantity of beer or whiskey and yet carry himself in a fairly straight line. Dick knew he was on his way to become a worse drunkard, and at last yielded to his wife's entreaties.

He would not sign the pledge, nor become a 'temperance crank,' but when he saw how the furniture became shabby, the wife's face grew care-worn, and the children's faces looked pale and pinched, he promised to leave the saloons alone, providing his wife would fetch him daily three glasses of beer. And Dick faithfully stuck to his agreement for nearly a year.

Christmas was approaching. Dick was eating his meagre dinner at his work, and

me see—' Here the teetotaler pulled out a pencil and note-book, and after a few minutes' work read off the following:

'If you had saved the price of the three beers a day since last Christmas, you would have been able to buy, during the year, the following things:

Six sacks of flour.
Six sacks of potatoes.
One sack of rolled wheat.
One sack of oatmeal.
25 lbs. of split peas.
25 lbs. of beans.
20 lbs. of butter.
24 doz. of eggs.
100 lbs. of sugar.
20 lbs. of tea.
10 lbs. of coffee.
15 chickens for sandwiches to take to lunch.

'Then you would have enough money left to buy a turkey and plum pudding for a

Christmas Treasures

I count my treasures o'er with care—
The little toy my darling knew,
A little sock of faded hue,
A little lock of golden hair.

Long years ago this holy time
My little ones, my all to me—
Sat robed in white upon my knee,
And heard the merry Christmas chime.

'Tell me, my little golden head,
If Santa Claus should come to-night—
What shall he bring my baby bright—
What treasures for my boy?' I said.

Then he named his little toy,
While in his round and mournful eyes
There came a look of sweet surprise
That spake his quiet, trustful joy.

And as he lisped his evening prayer
He asked the boon with childish grace;
Then toddling to the chimney place,
He hung his little stocking there.

That night, while lengthening shadows
crept,
I saw the white-winged angel come
With singing to our lowly home
And kiss my darling as he slept.

They must have heard his little prayer,
For in the morn, with rapturous face,
He toddled to the chimney-place
And found his little treasure there.

They came again one Christmas-tide—
That angel host, so fair and white—
And singing all that glorious night,
They lured my darling from my side.

A little sock, a little toy,
A little lock of golden hair,
The Christmas music on the air,
A-watching for my baby boy.

But if again that angel train
And golden head come back to me,
To bear me to eternity,
My watching will not be in vain.
—Eugene Field.

Christmas Roses.

(May Riley Smith, in 'Onward.')

I gave into a brown and tired hand
A stem of roses, sweet and creamy white,
I know the bells rang merry tunes that
night,
For it was Christmas-time throughout the
land,
And all the skies were hung with lanterns
bright.

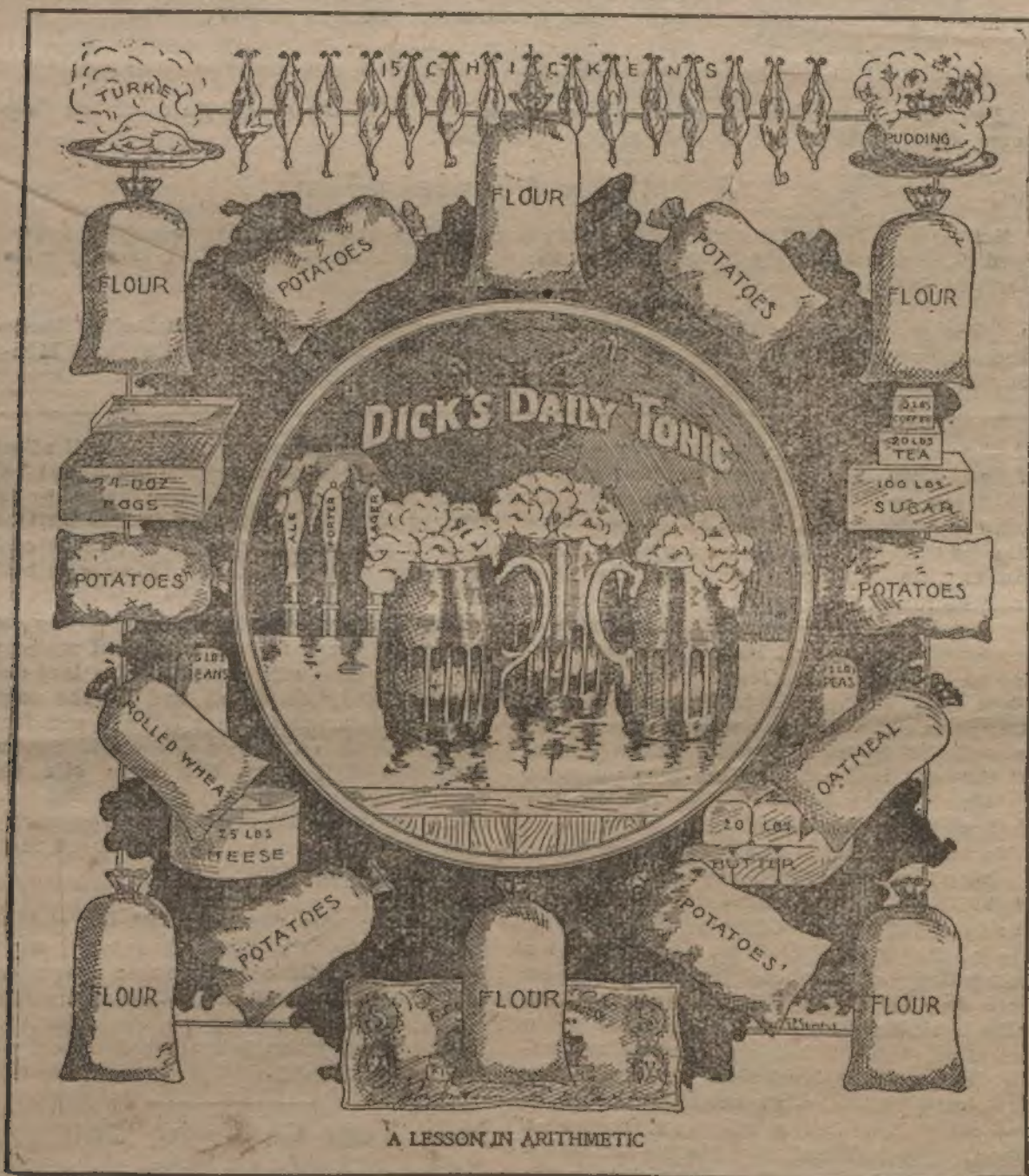
The brown hand held my roses graceless-
ly;
They seemed more white within their dus-
ky vase;
A scarlet wave suffused the woman's face.
'My hands so seldom hold a flower,' said
she,
'I think the lovely things feel out of
place.'

Oh, tired hands that are unused to flow-
ers;
Oh, feet that tread on nettles all the way!
God grant His peace may fold you round
to-day,
And cling in fragrance when these Christ-
mas hours,
With all their mirthfulness, have passed
away!

There are in the Southern States, says
'The American Issue,' 27,000,000, and 17,-
000,000 of these are living under absolute
prohibition.

Expiring Subscriptions.

Would each subscriber kindly look at
the address tag on this paper? If the date
thereon is Dec., 1903, it is time that
the renewals were sent in so as to avoid
losing a single copy. As renewals always
date from the expiry of the old subscrip-
tions, subscribers lose nothing by remit-
ting a little in advance.



A LESSON IN ARITHMETIC

complained to his workmate, a total ab-
stainer, how hard it was, with his present
low wages, to buy fuel, and keep the fam-
ily in clothing and decent food. He en-
vied his mate, who had chicken sand-
wiches.

'Look here, Dick, you could have the
same fare as I have. The money I used
to spend in drink and tobacco is now suffi-
cient to keep our house going since I got
saved and began to live right.

'Oh, that's 'all right,' responded Dick,
'but I have given up the saloon, and cut
myself down to three pints of beer a day;
that is the only thing I have to keep up
my strength. Then I can't give up my
pipe; a smoke is necessary to keep a fel-
low contented on small wages and hard
work. I can't have even a decent Christ-
mas dinner at my home.'

'Listen to me, Dick, while I work out a
simple sum. Supposing we leave the to-
bacco out of the calculation, and consider
the beer only. Three beers per day—let

Christmas dinner, and give your wife a
five-dollar bill to buy goods for a new
dress.'

'Go on, Bill, you are joking,' incredulous-
ly cried Dick.

'Look over the sum yourself, Dick.'

Dick looked long and earnestly.

'You are right, Bill; you are right,' he
said at length; 'I never considered it in
this light, and by the help of God I'm go-
ing to give it up, and make home happier.'

'We'd better pray, Dick. There's noth-
ing like getting soundly saved to help
one to get rid of the evil appetites.'

And they prayed.

M. Witte, Russian Minister of Finance,
is an ardent temperance worker. He is a
teetotaler, and induced the Czar to decor-
ate the men and women who are the most
active in temperance work. He makes no
secret of his preference for teetotalers in
various offices of the department he con-
trols.

HOUSEHOLD.

Christmas Candies and How to Make Them.

There is an art in candy making as in most things, but to succeed one needs not only patience, but a genuine fondness for the work. This last quality most people have, especially the little ones, and they will no doubt take genuine interest in the preparation of their Christmas supply of sweets if some grown person will help them. The following recipes are from one of the best authorities and may be considered absolutely reliable:

To make French Cream or Fondant, which is the basis of almost all French bonbons, put two pounds of granulated white sugar with half a pint of hot water in a tin pan and bring it sharply to a boil. Allow it to boil steadily for eight minutes without touching or stirring; as soon as it begins to look thick test it by dropping a little from the spoon, and if it threads, lift the pan from the range and rub a small spoonful of the mixture against the sides of a basin. If it becomes creamy and balls easily between the fingers, pour the whole into a basin and let it set quite cold; beat it sharply with a large spoon or china pestle, till it becomes a smooth kind of pomade like cold cream. If the sugar is not sufficiently cooked to ball easily, replace it on the fire, watching it carefully for a minute or two, till it reaches the desired temperature. If, on the contrary, owing to accident or inattention, it has overboiled and become sugary, add a few spoonfuls of water, return the pan to the fire and begin all over.

It is well to begin making this cream in very small quantities at first, till perfection is attained, as though easy to describe, it requires close attention and much quickness to get it perfectly right. When, however, the secret is mastered, it may be made in the quantities given above, or even larger ones (only remember the larger the quantities the quicker must be the work!), as it keeps well for a considerable time if stocked in a closed jar. When required for use, this jar should be stood in a pan three parts full of boiling water, and stirred carefully till melted to the proper consistency. It is quite worth the while to master the art of fondant making, as so many delicate sweets can be made with it. For instance, pour a little fondant into a basin (standing in hot water), and flavor to taste with any essence you please, coloring it to suit the flavorings; thus for essence of peppermint, color the mixture a faint green, roll it on a slightly oiled slab into a long roll rather thinner than your little finger, and cut it with the scissors into three-quarter inch lengths; these when dry will give peppermint creams; if colored a soft violet with 'damson blue' vegetable coloring, and flavored with violet syrup, it makes a very delicate bonbon, especially if a crystallized violet be pressed on to each; or use a drop or two of carmine, flavor with rose water or maraschino and garnish with crystallized rose leaves; in short, you can vary these fondants to suit any decorations you require.

Nut creams, again, are delicious, and are easy to make when French cream presents no difficulty. Melt a little of the fondant till fairly thin, flavor to taste with coffee, stir it in as many blanched and chopped nuts as it will take up, and leave it till stiff, then dip each into semi-liquid fondant, and set it aside till dry, the covering fondant being colored and flavored to taste. Dates and French plums can be converted into most festive dessert sweets by stoning them, inserting a roll of daintily colored and flavored fondant into each, pressing the fruit well round the cream, and either leaving it plain or dipping it into sugar boiled to the crack to glaze it. Of course, color must be studied, as the contrast between the fruit and the roll of fondant showing at each end constitutes much of the beauty

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of the sweet. For instance, peppermint, of the sweet. For instance, peppermint, or pistachio, suits plums, rosewater and pink icing the dates, etc. Walnut cream also may be made by breaking off pieces of the fondant and patting them out between your hands till about the size and twice the thickness of a quarter, then press a carefully shelled and halved walnut kernel on to each side, leave them till set, when they are dipped in sugar boiled to the crack. The fondant may naturally be colored and flavored to taste, coffee-flavored fondant is very nice for this purpose. In short, there is no end to the variety that may be obtained in this way.

To make Molasses Candy, put into a pan a pint of molasses, half a pound of brown sugar, half a teaspoonful of vinegar and one ounce of butter. Stir all this over the fire to the 'crack,' that is, till on a piece being dropped into cold water it sets at once and falls to the bottom of the dish with a tinkle like glass; then pour it on the oiled slab. When cool enough to handle (be careful about this, as hot candy will burn frightfully) turn in the edges and make it all into a ball; now fix it on a strong hook and pull it all into even strips then cut into pieces with the scissors. To pull candy properly is something of an art. To do it successfully, oil or butter the hands well. Have a good stout hook firmly fastened to the wall or window, and, when the candy is cool enough to handle, lift up the mass and throw it over the hook; now pull it towards you, making the candy and not your hands move, or you will blister your hands all over before the candy is half pulled. When you find the candy beginning to break from the hook, throw it back over it again, and so keep on till it is finished.

For Vanilla Candy, boil together, without stirring, from twenty minutes to half an hour two pounds of granulated sugar, one-third of a pint of water, one-sixth of a pint of vinegar, a piece of butter the size of an egg, and one tablespoon glycerine; when on dropping a little of this into cold water it hardens at once add to it a small teaspoon of cream of tartar, pour it all on to well-buttered plates to cool, and pour two teaspoons of essence of vanilla over the top. Let it cool, then pull it till it becomes beautifully white, and cut it with the scissors into sticks, etc., as you please. If kept a week it turns quite creamy.

To make Butterscotch, put into a pan

half a pound of brown sugar, a gill of water, a teaspoon of vinegar, and about half an ounce of butter, and boil together for twenty minutes, then pour it into buttered tins or plates, marking it out as it cools with the back of a knife. Flavor to taste as you pour it into the tins.

For Coconut Candy boil one pound, ten ounces of sugar in half a pint of water to the 'ball,' then stir into it half a large coconut thinly shredded, and let the sugar just boil through it; now lift the pan from the fire, rub a little of the sugar against the sides of the pan, and then stir this rubbed sugar through it all till the mass looks 'grained' all over, when you turn it into buttered or oiled tins, and mark it out in bars before it sets.

To those who can only get the cheaper grades of factory candy it is well worth while to take time and trouble over these, and one person can in a day make from 15 to 20 lbs., making up the creams in the evening, when the older children will delight in helping.

New Year Cakes for Children.

Mix a good cup-cake batter and divide into two portions. Flavor one portion with vanilla and bake in two thin sheets. To the second portion add almonds blanched and cut in strips, finely cut candied fruits of various colors, cut figs and angelica and a sprinkling of the little pink and white 'hundreds and thousands.' Bake this batter in a sheet one inch thick. Prepare also an icing by boiling together one pint of sugar and one cupful of water until a little dropped into cold water can be rolled to a very soft ball between the fingers; do not stir the syrup after the sugar is dissolved or it will surely granulate. When it has reached the ball stage take quickly from the fire and let stand until it is lukewarm. Then turn slowly and steadily until the syrup clouds and thickens; when too stiff to be stirred with the spoon take it in the hands and knead and work like dough until it is very smooth and soft. This icing is what is known to confectioners as fondant, and if covered closely so that it is safe from all contact with the air it can be kept for weeks. When needed the required amount is taken off and put into a cup which is standing in a pan of hot water. Mash and beat with a fork until it is smooth and as soft as cream,

when it may be flavored, colored and used. Do not stop stirring as long as it is in contact with heat or it will turn to clear syrup. For this fancy work it is well to have on hand several kinds of color paste, such as fruit-red, mandarin-yellow, caramel and leaf-green; or cochineal, egg yolks and chocolate may be used.

Cut the sheet of fruit-cake into squares, strips, and diamonds and dip the top of each piece in the icing. Ornament with strips of angelica, bits of candied cherry or a single raisin. On others trace a pattern, initials or a name, using a fine camel's-hair brush and melted chocolate or egg yolk. Cut one of the plain cake sheets in half, spread one-half with jam or jelly and cover with the other half, pressing them together, then cut into fancy shapes and ice the tops. Cut the remaining sheet of cake into stars, crescents or other small fancy shapes and dip them in the icing, laying them on waxed paper until the icing is firm. All of these may be ornamented by using the cut candied fruits, a sprinkling of the 'hundreds and thousands' or colored granulated sugar.—American Paper.

ANTI-DEBT TEACHING.

The late Charles H. Spurgeon, says the New York 'Observer,' was mighty in the Scriptures, but there was one text which perhaps earlier than any other he had drilled into him, and that was the exhortation, 'Owe no man anything.' The Rev. John Spurgeon (whose own father, James Spurgeon, minister of the Independent Church at Stambourne, Essex, who died at the age of eighty-six, in 1864, was known as 'the last of the Puritans') had stern ideas as to how children should be brought up. Charles Spurgeon, in his autobiography tells how, as a very small boy in pinafores, he got into debt at a little shop to the extent of a farthing for a slate pencil. His father (who recently died in England at the age of ninety-one) heard of it, and the son thus described what happened: 'He gave me a very powerful lecture upon getting into debt, and how like it was to stealing, and upon the way in which people were ruined by it; and how a boy who would owe a farthing might one day owe a hundred pounds and get into prison, and bring his family into disgrace. Then I was marched off to the shop, like a deserter marched into barracks, crying bitterly all down the street, and feeling so dreadfully ashamed, because I thought everybody knew I was in debt. The farthing was paid amid many solemn warnings, and the poor debtor was set free, like a bird let out of a cage.' Not all parents at the present day would have the courage or would take the pains to give a similar exhortation to their offspring who should happen to go into debt to the extent of a cent or so. Nevertheless, the anti-debt teaching is a form of instruction much needed by the young.

BORAX FOR INSECTS.

If you are troubled with ants, roaches or beetles in your closet or pantry, wash all the shelves and dry thoroughly. Then sprinkle powdered borax over them and cover with clean paper. The pests will speedily depart. You need not be afraid to use plenty of it for it is absolutely harmless. The free use of borax deodorizes and purifies the cellar and any other place where it is used.—E. J. C., in 'Green's Fruit Grower.'

This is the feast time of the year;
The blessed Advent draweth near.
Let rich and poor together break
The bread of love for Christ's sweet sake.
Against the time when rich and poor
Must ope for Him a common door
Who comes a guest, yet makes a feast,
And bids the greatest and the least.

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